

1st A FUNERAL
SERMON.

16
Delivered upon Occasion of the Death
of that Worthy Gentleman

John Marsh, Esq;

Who lived at *Garston-Hall* in *Watford* Parish in the
County of *Hertsford*; And Died in the Lord, and
was Buried *Septemb. 16, 1681.*

By *Samuel Slater*, Late Minister of the Gospel at
Edmunds-Bury in *Suffolk*.

Mat. 57. 2. *He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their Beds,
each one walking in his uprightness.*

L O N D O N,

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The Epistle Dedicatory.

To my Honour'd Friends, Madam Mary,
and her Pious Son and Daughters.

AT the Motion and Desire of your (since Deceased) Father and Husband, my Worthy Friend, I did, after the Solemnization of his Funeral, deliver the following Discourse to you in Private. And in order to Common Good, I have here made it Publick. The Father of Mercies accompany it with his Blessing upon you, and all others into whose hands it shall come, that thereby Love to and Faith in Christ may be promoted, together with Holiness of Life and Comfort at Death. That you may not be unmindful of that King of Terrors at his greatest distances, nor terrified by him in his nearest approaches. I was greatly pleased to see your gracious Deportment under that Afflictive Providence, which deprived you of one so desireable, and that you were duely affected with your Loss, yet sweetly submissive to your God. Though the Cup was bitter, you did not faint nor murmur. It was indeed a Mercy that you enjoyed him so long, for he was full of Dayes, and had a flourishing old Age. And it may be a Comfort, that you shall see him again in Heaven, where you shall Eternally rejoyce together in God. That your Souls may prosper, your Graces increase,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

increase, your Comforts abound, your Daies may be filled with Mercy and Duty, and your selves at last received into Glory is the Hearty Prayer of

Your Friend and

Decemb. 22, 1681.

Servant in our

dear Lord Jesus,

S. Slater.



Errata corrigenda.

PAGE 13 line 16, for *primative* read *privative*: p. 14. l. 12. for *placis* & *praisies*. l. 22. for *Son* & *Six*. p. 20. l. 10. for *lashed* & *liskened*. p. 22. l. 6. dele *thus*. p. 23. l. 31. dele *that*. l. 36. after *am* l, r *that* l. p. 26. l. 20. for *him* & *them*. p. 30. l. 14. for *Judges* & *Judge*. l. 37. for *Locds* and *Gods* & *Lord* and *God*. p. 34. l. 34. for *their* & *the*. p. 35. l. 16. for *in* & *is*. p. 36. l. 10. for *not* & *now*.

. Luke.

LUK. 2. 29, 30.

*Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace,
according to thy word.*

For mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.

THESE are the words of Holy *Simeon*, who is supposed to be the Son of *Hillel*, and Chief of the great *Synedrion*, and Father of the Learned Doctor *Gammaliel*, at whose Feet, the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, *Paul* was educated. Concerning whom the Sacred Scripture testifies, that he was a Just and Devout man, *i. e.* Godly, and Righteous, Wary, and Cautious; A man that managed his Life, and ordered his actions with that due circumspection, as evidenced his sedulous care of approving himself to God.

This good man waited for the Consolation of *Israel*, *viz.* the incarnation, or coming of the Son of God, the promised, and longingly expected *Messiah*; in whom all our comforts are laid up, if we be *Israelites* indeed. That Jesus alone can be our Consolation, who is our Salvation. It is only under his shadow we can sit with great delight, because under that alone we can sit in safety. Those men and Women that seek their comforts out of Christ, will find themselves under miserable disappointment. And by how much the higher they are raised in hopes and expectation, by so much the lower they will be plunged into sorrow and vexation. I do earnestly beseech you, Christians, to remember this, that Christ is the Consolation of *Israel*, and improve it for your Souls advantage. Especially I speak this to you, my Friends, who are most nearly concerned in the late stroke of Providence, and do now mourn under the smart thereof. Learn whither you should repair for support and healing; even to this Jesus, who to this day, yea, for ever continues to

be the Consolation of *Israel*: and in whom you may find abundantly enough to sweeten this bitter Cup.

This *Simeon* who thus waited, was well rewarded for his Faith and Patience, having this assurance given him, that he should not see Death, until he had seen the Lord's Christ. He should not see Death until Christ was born: Christ should come upon Earth before *Simeon* should go to Heaven: From whence you may learn this truth. That waiting upon God is not in vain: much time may be spent in it, but it will not be time mis-spent. God is not wont to send a waiting Soul mourning away. Such an one may come to God with a tear in it's Eye, but sooner or later, it shall go from him with a smile upon it's Countenance. Thou, O mourning, drooping Christian, dost not see Christ now, he covers himself with a Cloud; well, sink not under discouragement, but let patience have it's perfect work, and do thou charge thy Soul to wait on, I am perswaded, before thou seest Death, thou shalt see Jesus; Christ will manifest himself unto thee; however, as soon as Death hath closed thy bodily Eyes, thou shalt both see him, and thy self with him in Glory.

Well. *Simeon* having waited long, though not too long, came into the Temple, which did then exceed in Glory, for there he met with Jesus. And having met with him, he tooke him up in his arms; and he was a most blessed arm-full; doubtless the good old man was glad he had got him, and his heart did leap within him. He never before embraced so great and glorious an Object. And I tell thee, O Christian, who hast got Christ in thy Heart, and dost hug him in the arms of thy Faith, thou hast as much reason to rejoyce, as *Simeon* did, when he had him in his arms: for it is Christ in you the hope of Glory. If he be formed in you, you shall be saved by him.

Having taken Christ in his arms, what did the good man do? Oh! he blessed God, and truly he had reason. How could he be without his Song, when he had got him, who was his strength and Salvation. We have cause to bless God for Creatures, for our Health, Strength, Estates; and Relations, because we are less than the least of these, but we have infinitely more cause to bless God for Christ, because he is a gift of the dearest love, and of the greatest excellency. All Earthly comforts come from the hand of God, but Christ comes from the

Some part of that which *Simeon* spake upon this occasion, you have in the words of the Text, in which take notice of these two things.

1. *Simeons* humble petition and request to God. Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word.

2. The ground or reason of this his request, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.

This Scripture being chosen by our deceased Brother for his Swan-like-Song; I shall present you with those several Observations I have made upon it, and briefly touch upon them, and so pass to that which I purpose most to insist upon.

Doct. 1. *Every Godly man is God's Servant.* So *Simeon* stiled himself here, Lord, lettest thou thy Servant. And so did *David*, *Psalms*. 116. 16. *O Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant.* He gloried more in his being Gods Servant, than in his being King of *Israel*.

Wicked men are the Slaves of Corruption, and Vassails of Satan, the Scriptures saith, they serve divers Lusts, and truly that is an hard task: if a man cannot well serve two Masters, how shall he serve divers, many.

Their service is meer drudgerie and bondage. Two things may justly discommend it; viz. they have dirty works, and they shall have dreadful wages; their works foul them, and their wages undoe them.

But you, O Saints, are the Servants of God, and you are so upon a threefold account, besides that of your Creation.

First, Upon the account of your Redemption, which was brought about by the power of Christ, who rescued you out of the clutches of sin and Satan. *Luk.* 1. 74. *He hath delivered us out of the hands of our Enemies, that we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our lives.*

Secondly, You are Gods Servants upon the score of purchase, that Jesus who purchased Heaven and Glory for you, hath also purchased you for himself, and the price which he laid down, was no less, than that of his own Blood: and therefore it is your unquestionable duty to glorifie him in your Souls, Bodies, and Spirits. *1 Cor.* 6. 20.

Thirdly, You are Gods Servants by virtue of Covenant; you have chosen one another, he hath chosen you for his people, and you have chosen him for the Lord your God; an agreement hath been made, and Indentures sealed. *Ezekiel* 16. 8.

I entered into Covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.

Use. Remember and seriously consider then, whose you are, and unto whom you belong. Study and acquaint your selves with your Masters will, and knowing it, apply your selves immediately to the performance of it; let your life be a life of obedience to God; and whatsoever your hand findeth to do, as the matter of his Will, be sure that you do it with all your might, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain: and that it is most highly reasonable you should be as industrious about the work of God, as you have been about the work of Satan, as diligent for your best Friend, as for your greatest Enemy; as industrious for the saving of your Souls, as you have been for the damning of them. And for your encouragement and quickning, consider.

1. First, That in the service of God there is perfect freedom, his Yoke is easie, and his burden light. You are never so much your own men, as when you are Gods servants: You are so his servants, as that you also are his Children: Your work is cut out by the hand of a most tender Father, and therefore it should be done with the Heart and Spirit of a Child. *David* resolved to run the way of Gods Commandements.

2. As you have the noblest work, so you shall one day have the most glorious rewards. You may now do your work with singing, you shall then receive your reward with admiring. When you have done the work of Servants, you shall be installed in the inheritance of Sons, where Christ is, there shall his Servants also be, to behold his Glory, and to share with him in it, for the Apostle assures us, that he and his people shall be glorified together. And their work is not so difficult, nor are their sufferings so pressing, but that their future Crown will unspeakably excel them for its weight and splendor.

Doct. 2, I Observe. That Gods Servants must be at Gods dispose, and not at their own. Lord, lettest thou thy Servant depart. I dare not stir without thy order, thou didst send me hither, and here I must stay, until thou shalt please to send for me hence. I am weary of being here, Lord wilt thou dismiss me, and give me leave to be gone. It is Gods unquestionable right to

order out as he pleaseth concerning us, and that in these things.

1. God may cut out for us what work he pleaseth, and lay it either in active or passive obedience as he thinks good: Whatsoever his Will is, we must not dispute, but obey it, and so be like those ministering Spirits, the Angels above who do his pleasure, yea, all his pleasure.

2. It is Gods right to carve out our allowances, either a full, or a scantie condition; abundance, or want to set us in a Palace, or upon a Dunghil, to cloath us in Scarlet, or in Canvas, to give us comfort or afflictions: We must be wholly at Gods finding. Feed me, said good *Agur*, with food convenient for me, he did not prescribe to God, but left God to judge what was so.

3. It is fit that God should measure out our time for us, and bestow upon us a longer or a shorter day of life; we do not live, nor do we die at our own pleasure, or at the will and pleasure of men, but God. He is not only our Lord, but also the Lord of our time. So *David* cheerfully acknowledged, my times are in thy hands, to make them cloudie, or serene, halcyon, or tempestuous, to prolong, or to contract them, as seemeth good to him. It is an indubitable part of Gods Royal Prerogative to order concerning us; and it is the unquestionable duty of our place to submit to his Orders. Whatsoever he commands, we must do, even as did the *Centurions* servants; if he said to one of them, Go, he went, if he said to another, Come, he came. Reason good we should do so, for all the Commandements of God are Holy, and Just, and Good; And an Universal Cordial Respect to them will evidence our sincerity, and secure us from shame. And whatsoever God doth, we must accept not only kissing his Hand when it sweetly feeds us, nor only his Arm when it graciously supports, but likewise his Rod, when it doth smartly lash us. There ought to be no discontents, no quarrellsome murmurings, nor immoderate excessive sorrows, when he blasts our sweetest Comforts, or kills our dearest Relations; yea, though he should do it with a violent stroak, for he may do what he will with his own. When he destroyed *Nadab*, and *Abihu* by fire in the very act of their sins, *Aaron* their Father held his peace. He saw that God was provoked by them, and angry with them, and therefore concluded it his wisest course to be quiet. It is indeed extreme madness for the Clay to say to

to the potter, why dost thou so, or for the creature to contend with his Creator. Such contendings procure us heavier blows.

3. Doct. *We may learn that Death is a departure*; Lord ! lettest thou thy Servant depart. When a man dies, he removes ; He doth not then go back again into nothing, but into another Place, and into another State. Christ called his Death a going away. *Joh. 14. 28. Ye have heard how I sayd unto you, I go away.* So *Joh. 16. 7. It is expedient for you, that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.* Our Death also is a going away.

Those that make the longest stay here, must be gone at last. A wicked man when he dies, departs out of his warm Climate, and pleasant State, from his Friends and Riches, from his Comforts and Delights, into Miseries and Torments, which are Intolerable and Eternal. And it is no wonder if such a man play loath to depart, and Death be unto him a King of Terrors. But when an Holy Gracious Person departs, he leaves all his sins and enemies, all his troubles and sorrows behind him, and he goes to a better place, and better company, and infinitely better delights : He enters into peace and into rest, and into the joy of his Lord. He gets off from the stormy troublesome Sea of this World, where he was so frequently indangered, and baths himself in those Rivers of pleasure, which are at God's Right-hand for evermore.

Use 1. Let the consideration hereof quiet us, under those Breaches which Death makes in our Families and Relations. Though it be very afflictive to think, my dear Husband is gone, my tender Father is gone, my loving and faithfull Friend is gone ; Yet this will lighten and sweeten that affliction, if we think whether he is gone, from Earth to Heaven, from Troubles to Joy and Glory, from us to God, Christ, the Spirit, Angels and Saints above. Oh Blessed, and Everlastingly making Exchange.

Use 2. Let the consideration hereof quicken us, the good Lord grant that we all may frequently and seriously think of this our departure, and industriously bestir our selves in order to a full preparation for it. Oh let us get our work done before we go ; Christ did so : *Joh. 17. 4. I have finished the work which thou ga-*

vest me to do, and now come I to thee. Mind; follow, finish that for which you came into the World, before you are called out of the World. Oh! get your evidences full and fair, that when Death seizeth upon you, you may lay hold upon Eternal Life. Make sure of Heaven before you come to leave the Earth. How sweet was it for Christ to tell his Disciples, I go to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and to your God.

Doct. 4. We may from hence learn this Lesson; *That a departure in peace is exceeding desirable.* This was the subject matter of Simeon's desire and prayer. Lord, lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace; He would go out in a calm, neither in a stink through sin, nor in a storm through fear, but in an holy peace. This promise was made to Abraham, the Father of the Faithfull; Thou shalt go to thy Fathers in peace: That is, with a quiet, pacate and comfortable Spirit, with joy and satisfaction, without any trouble for what he should part with, and without fear of any thing he should meet with. And you find Psal. 37. 37. The Royal Prophet bids you, *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is Peace.* Whatever troubles he is encountered by, in his way, he hath Peace at his end.

A wicked man may dye in Stupidity, but not in Peace, he may then be secure, but he is not safe, though he then have no trouble, yet he hath cause enough of trouble. My God saith there is no Peace to the wicked, neither in his Life, nor at his Death. Such an one dies in sin, and therefore he cannot dye in Peace, But now a Godly man, whose heart is sprinkled from an evil Conscience, hath Peace in his Death, usually he hath Peace with his own Conscience, that befriends him, witnesseth for him, speaks comfortably to him, and is an excellent Cordial at a dying hour; Always he hath peace with his God, they are Friends; he is Reconciled to God, and God to him; Moses dyed at the mouth of the Lord; God kist him home.

Use Well my Friends, I am confident you all desire such a Death, you would willingly go out of the World in peace. Oh, let it not be only the matter of your desire, but likewise of your endeavour, use means in order thereunto, and follow these directions.

1. Make your peace now; Cease your enmity against God, throw down your weapons of Rebellion, and return unto your duty. How can those persons rationally hope, that God should be a Friend to them when they dye, who are enemies to God while they live, now, now, seek peace and ensue it.

2. Make hast to Christ, make sure of Christ, get unto him, He, and he alone is the peace, and the Prince of peace, there is no peace to be had out of Christ. Let him saith God, lay hold upon my strength, that is upon Christ, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me. Have a care that you be not found in your sins, nor in your selves, nor in your own Righteousness, trusting in that; No, no, saith *Paul*. *Phil. 3. 8, 9. I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him.*

3. Look after a sanctifying change in your hearts and natures, follow Peace and Holiness; Holiness both of inward Disposition, and of outward Conversation; Grace ushers in peace, purity and peace go together, the work of Righteousness is peace, and the effect of Righteousness is quietness and assurance for ever. By the study and practice of Holiness you may lose your peace with some men, but you will keep up, and maintain your peace with God, yea, and with good men too. *Prov. 22. 11. He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips, the King shall be his Friend.*

Doct. 5. VVe may from these words gather this instruction. *That a truly gracious man, may very well be willing and free, and forward to dye.* Thus good *Simeon* was here, he prayed for Death; Let me depart, let me be gone out of this VWorld; Do thou Lord send for me, that I may come to thee. And not only so, but he also prayed for a quick dispatch, a speedy dismissal, as one that was in hast to be gone: As you may learn from that particle *Now*, now lettest thou thy Servant depart; He did full well know, that he must dye one day, that was certain and unavoidable, the Chambers of the grave are prepared for all the living. but he would dye presently, now O Lord! now without more ado; now without any longer tarrying. A wicked man doth not care how long Death stays; he puts that day far from him, because he looks upon it as a very evil day; But good *Simeon* did not care how soon Death came, he lookt for it.

yea, and he long'd for it, he thought it was too slow pac'd, and its motions towards him not quick enough; He knew Death would do him a good turn, and therefore he was a voluntier in dying.

And I must say this, supposing that a Godly man have no cloud upon his Spirit, and no flaw nor blurr in his Evidence, supposing that God shines upon his Soul with the bright and comfortable Beams of his love and favour, and that his own Conscience doth speak comfort to him plainly, I know no reason, no solid, substantial reason why he should be backward, and unwilling to dye, unless it be serviceableness and usefulness in the World: If once a Christians work be done, what should he stay here for? If once he be full ripe for Glory, why should he stand any longer? It is not worth his while to continue here, were it not that he may do good in his place, and be helpfull to others, and yet farther serve the interest of Gods name and glory, and upon that account he ought to deny himself, and be willing to wait yet longer for his Rest and Crown. Thus it was with Holy Paul: *Phil. i. 23. I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better;* It was better for him, he knew he should mend himself; But saith he, *ver. 24. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh, is more needfull for you.* They would need his company, and his labours, his counsels, and his comforts, and upon that account he submitted. *Ver. 25. Having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of Faith.* And he was content so to abide.

Indeed there is not any reason at all, why a wicked man should be willing to dye, he can promise himself no good by it; It doth not come Peaceably to him, it brings it's sting along with it; He dyes to dye, his Natural Death is a passage to Eternal: He loseth all by Death, and gets nothing; Therefore I say, there is no reason at all why he should desire to dye. And there is but one reason (I mean which is worth any thing, and which is not easily answered,) why a truly Godly man should be willing to live? And that is serving his Generation according to the will of God. But I am sure, there are a great many weighty and cogent reasons; why such an one should be willing to dye, and not only submit to Death, but also welcome it, and long for it; of which I shall speak more by and by.

Doct. 6. A Sixth Instruction, which these words do most freely afford us, is this; *That though a Godly man be never so desirous to dye, yet it is his duty, and will be his business to stoop, and submit his will to the will of God.* Thus it was with this holy man, he was willing and desirous to dye, he even longed to be gone: Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart, but he would not go without license, he would stay Gods time.

Though Heaven be never so desireable, and this World never so troublesome, though the Country be never so pleasant, and the way thither never so tedious: Be our sicknesses, pains and crosses never so great and heavy; Be our enemies never so furious and violent, our dangers never so eminent, our persecutions never so sharp and bitter, our temptations never so fierce and fiery, we must in patience possess our Souls, and be content to bear them, till God shall please in his own time to command for us, a deliverance out of them. Let our conditions be never so dark and dismal, we must not escape by opening the door with the Devils Key, nor break out of Prison by offering violence to our own lives.

Job had very dreadfull exercises, his State was sad and deplorable; He was stript of all his outward enjoyments, bereaved of his beloved Children, smitten in his body with sores and inflammations, his Wife was a cross to him, and his Friends cruel; God himself carried as his enemy, and set him up for a mark to shoot at; He had but one comfort left him, that was the Testimony of a good Conscience; Yet he was resolved to wait all the days of his appointed time, untill his change should come. He would not make more hast than good speed. As long as God was pleased to tarry, holy *Job* was well pleas'd to wait. VVe should write after so fair a Copy, so to do is both our wisdom and our interest: For God is wiser than we, his VVisdom is infinite, and his time is always best. He that goeth to his grave in Gods time, goes as a shock of Corn in its season. God always plucks his fruit, vvhhen it is ripe and fit to be gathered; He vvill not pluck it sooner, and it shall not hang any longer.

Doct. 7. The seventh Doctrine vvhich these vvords afford us is this. Gods promises are to be pleaded by us: Thus in the Text; Novv lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, *according to thy word*; There is the argument that he useth for the

enforcing his Petition. He had received a Revelation from God, that he should not see Death, *i. e.* that he should not die, he should not taste of Death, though he saw the Death of others, yet he should not see his own Death, until he had seen the Lord's Christ, the Messiah, or the Lord's anointed one, namely, Jesus the Saviour. And now, saith He, Lord, now that I have seen him, do thou graciously grant me my dismissal. Be it unto me according to thy word.

Have you a word, O Christians, a word of promise, blessed be God you are rich in them, God hath abounded in promises to his people. You have words of inestimable value, words better than Gold, better than mans bonds, words that are suitable to, and cordial in every condition, into which providence can cast you. Now then, what is your duty with reference to these words, but to make use of them. It is pity they should lie by neglected, as useless. Fetch them out as you have occasion, and live upon them, that when you are rich in promises, you may not be poor in comforts. You do deal disingeniously with God, and unworthily with promises, unless you use them.

Q. If any one should propound this question, What is that right and proper use which we should make of promises?

A. I Answer, Turn them into Faith and Prayer, make use of the promises as food for your Faith, and matter for your Prayers. Promises are the Life of Faith, by these things men live, said good *Hezekiah*, and they are the strength of Prayer. So then,

1. You must believe the promises. Set to your Seal that God is true, and faithful, that his Word is settled in Heaven, that all his promises are in Christ *yes*, and in him *Amen*: *i. e.* of a most sure and certain accomplishment; and accordingly do you hope in them, and rejoyce in them, and rely upon them as security enough; cast your selves upon the word, do not question it's truth, do not doubt of its accomplishment, but firmly expect the making of it good, whatever the Devil, and Carnal Reason, and Flesh, and Blood suggest to the contrary. As long as you have the assurance of a promise, fear not Enemies, nor Difficulties, nor Dangers, but keep your way, and go on,

though there be Lions in it, and other Ravenous Beasts, worse than they.

2. Your business is to plead the Word, and urge it, and beg of God, that he would be pleased to fulfil it. We never improve promises as we ought, until we turn them into Prayer, and press God with them. Thus David did, *2 Sam. 7. 27. Thou O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy Servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy Servant found in his heart to pray this Prayer unto thee.* Thus Simeon did here, *let me depart according to thy word:* and you frequently meet with these expressions in *Psal. 119. Remember thy Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.* As long as that word was remembred, David knew, he himself should not be forgotten. — *My Soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word.* — *My Soul melteth for heaviness, strengthen thou me according to thy Word.* — *Oh, let thy mercies come unto me, even thy Salvation according to thy word.* — *I entreated thy Salvation with my whole heart, be merciful unto me according to thy word.* You see how good David was at it. He had a mind to be answered. He could not indure to meet with a denying God. A gracious Soul had rather lose his Comforts upon Earth, than his Prayers in Heaven. One of the saddest groans that ever such an one did utter, is, *Lam 3. 8. When I cry and shout, he shutteth out my Prayer.* Now David to prevent that, he strengthened his cause as much as he could, and so did bottom his Prayer upon, and back it with a promise; then he knew himself sure of acceptance and answer; for God could not deny Davids Prayer, but he must in so doing deny himself too, and falsifie his own word: and therefore observe, how he gets hold, and keeps it, and wrestles. *Psal. 143. 1. Here my Prayer O Lord, give ear to my supplications, in thy faithfulness answer me.* The good man had the Covenant and Promises at that time in his Heart and Eye, and thought he, now I may be bold, for I am sure enough; whom ever he doth send away with a repulse, he can't me; he is a faithful God, and therefore he will answer me, and that according to the desert of my heart; in thy faithfulness answer me. And truly, Christians, thus we all should do, if we would act wisely and advantagiously for our selves. Search the Scriptures, and see what promises speak appositely to your case, and

and take them, and carry them by Faith in Prayer unto God, and there put them in suit: Lord, I want Faith, Patience, and meekness; I am in such a difficultie, called out to such works, assaulted with such temptations, environed with such and such and such dangers, and thus and thus hast thou spoken, Lord make good thy word unto me thy Servant. This, this is the way to obtain, and as Princes to prevail with God,

Doct. 8. The Eighth Doctrine which these words afford us, is this. *That Christ is God's Salvation.* Good Simeon had been delighted with the sight of Jesus, and now saith he, *mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.* He is the Saviour whom God hath chosen in his Wisdom, raised up in his Love, and sent with Authority. He is not only willing to save, and mighty to save, but he is also authorized, and commissioned for it.

All our Salvation comes from Christ, both our Salvation from Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal Evils. Our primitive Salvation from Sin, and from Wrath, comes from Christ. He delivers us from the guilt of Sin, by his Righteousness imputed to us, and from the dominion of Sin, by the power of his Spirit and Grace, and from the damnation which was due to sin, by the sacrifice of himself, which he offered unto the Justice of his Father. He rescued us out of the hands of Satan, *as a tempter*, so that his fiery darts shall not mortally wound us, and as an Accuser, so that his charges shall not take place, nor prevail to our condemnation. He doth redeem his people from all their Iniquities; and from Death, and Hell, and he will never leave working, until he hath redeemed them from all their distresses.

And all our positive Salvation doth likewise come from Christ. It is he that reconciles us to God, that doth make, and keep the peace between God and us. He doth give us our title to Heaven, and our fitness for Heaven, and our possession of Heaven. He giveth both Grace and Glory. He doth first infuse the principle of Grace, and then adds the Crown of Glory: He it is that by his Spirit first breaths into them the breath of a Spiritual Life, and then imparts to them that Life more abundantly, and then at last advanceth them to, and rewards them with Eternal Life.

The Scripture calls him the Captain of our Salvation, and the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him.

Use. 1. Oh, how should we admire the goodness of God in giving Christ to us, and for us; and how should our Mouths be filled with his praises all the day.

Thus it was with good *Zacharias*, in *Luk. 1. 68.* *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited, and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of Salvation for us in the house of his Servant David.* Specially you that have found, and experienced his Salvation begun upon you; that whereas he is a Stone of stumbling to others, he is a Stone of support, a Foundation-Stone to you. And whereas he is a Rock of Offence to Thousands, He is a Rock of Salvation to you. Surely upon this score most enlarged places are due to God, and comely for you. That man that cannot be thankful for Christ, can be truly thankful for nothing. That heart is cold indeed, which this exceeding Riches of Grace will not warm, melt, and inflame.

Use. 2. Look carefully to it, that you do not fail of this grace of God, that you do not neglect this great Salvation. Do not slight Christ, do not stand at a distance from him; for there is not Salvation in any other. There is no name under Heaven which is a strong Tower, in which you may be safe, but only his: No Wings under which you can find healing and security, but only the Wings of this Eternal Son of Righteousness; therefore be willing to accept of his help, and that upon his own terms, which are most just and reasonable. If ever he save you, he will not save you in your sins, but from your sins. He will be sin's Death, if he be your Life. He will sanctify you, as well as well as save you. He will Rule you, and Govern you, as well as save you. He will bring you to his Foot, if ever he bring you to his Throne. God the Father hath exalted him to be a Prince, as well as a Saviour, and he will be both, or neither.

Use. 3. Be sure to flie to this Jesus in all your dangers, and distresses. When your Enemies without you are furious, and fears within you are high, so that your hearts are almost overwhelmed. then run to this Rock that is higher than you. When you find Corruptions are stirring within you, and you know not how to master them; and when you find Temptations are
violent

violent upon you, and you are not in your own strength able to resist them, then go to Christ, and beg ye of him, that he would be your Salvation. Thus *Paul* did, when he had a Thorn in the Flesh, and a Messenger from Satan buffetting him, then he besought the Lord thrice, and had this assurance, that Christ's grace was sufficient for him, and Christ's power should be made known in his weakness. And that gracious answer which was given to *Paul*, may be an encouragement to you, and all the people of God, to take the same course in the time of their need, and as this is a most proper course, so it is most prevailing, for the Lord is good to them that wait upon him, and to the Souls that seek him. And if you will consult your own experiences, they will tell you, that you get most of your comforts, and most of your victories upon your knees. And our Lord Jesus himself, by his own example directs you to this means; For when *Peter* was to be Tempted, then Christ prayed.

But there remains one thing more, very observable in the words, upon which I shall more largely insist than I have done upon all the foregoing points. The sight which this good man, old *Simeon* had of Gods Salvation was the reason, why he was so willing and ready, and desirous to depart, and take his last farewell of this World. From hence I offer to your consideration this truth.

Doct. 9. *Those that have had a sight of Gods Salvation, may very well be desirous of Dissolution, and think long till that happy day comes, which will convey them into the other World.* Some men wish for Death meerly in a fret, or discontented fit; They meet with disappointments and crosses, and troubles, their estates fail them, their trading grows dead, their friends unkind. A Ship at Sea is cast away or taken by Pirates, they are vexed at this and the other, and hereupon they are weary of Life, and now, whether they be fit or no, they would fain dye, thus it was with passionate *Jonah*, when that a Worm had smote his Gourd, that it withered, and the Sun darted his scorching beams upon his head, that he fainted, he wished in himself to dye, and said in his haste, that it was better for him to dye than to live. Poor man, he had been put out of sorts, and did then quite forget himself.

But this is very ordinary among people, as if every trouble

of life should make life it self a burden. And as if, though our comforts be consumed, it were not still of the Lords mercies that we our selves are not consumed ; And certainly, as ordinary as it is, it is exceeding sinfull ; It speaks a wofull impotency and weakness of Spirit, yea, and there is in it a Spirit of rebellion against God, when men would live no longer than God useth them as they themselves please, and orders all things concerning them according to their own mind and humour. If we did but seriously consider the Sovereignty of God, and that as we are his creatures, we must be at his dispose, we should see reason enough to submit to him, and be silent under all his providences. How great and how heavy soever our Cross is, we should carry it patiently, and be content to bear it, so long as our God will have us.

But now a sight of Christ, and of Gods Salvation by Christ, is a just and justifiable ground of such a desire, so that still it be with submission to the vwill and good pleasure of that God in whose hand our lives are. In the handling of this point I shall do these three things.

1. I shall shew how or in what ways a Soul may see Gods Salvation.

2. That one who hath had the sight of Gods Salvation, may very well be willing and desireous to dye.

3. And then improve it by way of use and application.

First, What is it to see Gods Salvation, or in what ways doth a man or woman see this blessed sight. Unto that I shall return this fourfold answer.

1. There is an ocular vision, or a sight of Gods Salvation with the eyes of the body. This sight those Saints had, who saw Christ, when he was here upon Earth, and Tabernacled among men, and who beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father ; This sight *Simcon* had, when his Parents brought him into the Temp'e, then *Simcon* took him up in his arms, and said, mine eyes have seen thy Salvation ; And upon that sight he was raised, and his heart so ravished, that he was willing immediately to set sail for the other World ; His Soul was ready to take its flight, he thought he had lived long enough, and had seen enough of these inferiour objects, he cared not for beholding the vanities of the World any more. Jesus in his fvvathering bands did outshine Princes in their Robes

and Thrones. And having once got a sight of him, he thought there was nothing else upon the face of the Earth worth seeing. Having seen Christ upon Earth, he had a mind to go see God in Heaven.

Now this sight we cannot have, and we need not have it now. In this respect the Lord Jesus is gone out of our sight. The Heavens do contain him, and so they must, until the time come, wherein there shall be the restitution of all things. And there is not any necessity of our seeing him in this manner, we are no losers by his absence. It was expedient for us that he went away, for it was upon his going, that the Comforter came, who is to abide with us for ever. All the work which Christ had to do upon Earth, was finished before he went away: what remains further to be done, he can do it in Heaven, as he sits upon his his Throne, at the right hand of his Father. And his bodily presence would contribute nothing at all to our advantage and comfort. We have a great deal more cause to please our selves with the thoughts of his being in Heaven, by which we see that justice is satisfied, yea, that he entered there as our Fore-runner, to make way for us, and to take a place up for us, and that he doth there ever live to make intercession for us. And upon these accounts, though now we see him not, yet believing, we may very well rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of Glory. For so in those dreadful days of Persecution, the Primitive Christians did as you may read in the 1 Pet. 1. 8.

II. Therefore there is a mental, or intellectual Vision. A seeing of Gods Salvation with a spiritual Eye, the Eye of the Soul, the Eye of Faith, which can see things remote, yea, at the greatest distance both of time and place. It is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11. 1. Faith can wade through the greatest difficulties, and look through the thickest Clouds, and grossest darkness, it can see within the Vail, and behold those invisible glories which are there.

That Speech of our Saviour to his Disciples, is applicable to our present purpose, and richly worth your Consideration. John 14. 19. *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me, because I live, ye shall live also.* The prophane, wicked, and unbelieving world should see him no more, they indeed did then see him, and were offended at him, they slighted and rejected him, because of his outward meanness, yea, they hated him

with a perfect hatred; they conspired his Death, and were never quiet; till they had seen him crucified, and breathed his last. Well saith Christ, ere it be long, these wretches shall see me no more. Since I am such a burden to them, I will ease them of that burden. Since I am their torment and vexation, since I am an eye sore to them, I will be gone, and they shall see me no more, they shall be troubled no more with the sight of me, and they shall be honoured no more with the sight of me. But saith Christ to his Disciples, you see me; that is, you shall see me. The Present Tense is put for the Future, to shew the certainty of the thing. As you see me now, so you shall see me hereafter. And that not only with your glorified Eye, with which you shall behold me, when we meet together in my Fathers Palace, where you shall be like me, because you shall see me as I am, but also you shall see me with a Spiritual Eye, even that of your Faith, after my ascension into my Kingdom, you shall so see me.

And it is observable, that Christ did call upon poor lost Sinners to take this sight of him long before his incarnation, and appearance in the Flesh. Thus in *Isa. 45. 22.* Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the Earth, for I am God, and there is none else. Now when he thus commanded, and invited all the ends of the Earth to look to him, you must understand it thus, that they were to look to him with this Eye of Faith, and that before he came to take upon him our Nature, and so again that excellent place, which respects us Gentiles. *Isa. 65. 1.* I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not. I said, behold me, behold me, unto a Nation that was not called by my name. In the same way still they were to behold him, namely by an Eye of Faith.

And it was with this sight, that Abraham saw him Hundreds of years before he was born. Our Saviour you know speaks thus to the obstinate and quarrelsome Jews, *John 8. 56.* Thou Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, he saw it, and was glad. He saw Christs day, or Christ in his day, by an Eye of Faith. Now, my Brethren in the same manner that Abraham, and others under the Old Testament saw Christ before he came in the Flesh, true Believers now in New Testament times may and do see him, though he be ascended into Heaven, and hath carried his Flesh with him thither. It is by Faith we see Christ, by Faith we apply him to our own Souls, and by Faith, that we eat

his Flesh, and drink his Blood, and fetch from him Life and Strength, Grace, Peace, and Comfort.

There are two things which Faith is furnished with, and both of singular use.

First, Faith hath a long hand, that can reach a great way. One of the Mighty Monarchs of the World was called *Longima*, or *Long Hand*. Above all Creatures, Faith doth best deserve that name, there is nothing out of its reach; it can take, and lay hold upon prophecies and promises, though they shall not be yet a great while accomplished. *Heb. 11. 13. These all dyed in the Faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, they were perswaded of them, and embraced them: as far off as they were, these Saints by Faith got them into their arms, and hugged them.* *Babylon* is yet standing, and triumphing, but the Believers Faith looks into the Prophecie, and saith, *Babylon the great is fallen, it is fallen.* This long-handed Grace can reach Heaven, it can lay hold upon the hope that is set before it; it layeth hold upon *Eternal Life*; nothing is too hard for Faith, to him that believeth all things are possible, and nothing is too high for Faith.

Secondly, Faith hath a quick, strong, and piercing Eye, it can see up to Heaven and it can see into Heaven; you find in *Acts 7.* that *Stephen* was stoned, yet when these stones were throwed down upon him, and at the last bear the breath out of his body, yet they could not strike out the Eye of his Faith: but that was quick still, and saw as well as ever; as you read *verse 55. Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.* It was doubtless to him a most sweet and comfortable sight, when he saw Devils incarnate upon Earth, working his ruine, then to see God incarnate in Heaven, beholding his Faith and Patience, appearing on his behalf, and standing ready to receive his soul.

Faith hath indeed an Eye, like the Eye of an Eagle. They say, an Eagle can behold the Sun in its greatest splendor and brightness, it can glare upon the Sun, and by that the tries her young ones whether they be genuine, or no; Now Faith can look Christ in the face, it can behold the Sun of Righteousness in the highest Heavens, who is ten thousand thousand times brighter than the Sun in the Firmament. The Evangelist tells us *John. 1.*

We beheld his Glory as the Glory of the only begotten Son of the Father. The true Believer may and doth by Faith see Christ in Heaven more clearly and stedfastly than he can see the Sun in these lower Heavens: For this Sun doth dazzle, and weaken, and blind the Eye that dwells too long upon it; for it is too eminent an object for the Organ. But now the Sun of Righteousness doth clear, and fortifie, and strengthen the Eye of Faith, so that the more he looks, the better he sees, the more able he is to converse with the object, because he is thereby more assimilated, and lusted to it. 2 Cor. 3. 14. *We all, with open Face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

3. There is a sight of Gods Salvation by the vertue, or help of inward experience. The gracious Soul sees the Harvest in the seed, the Topstone in the Foundation that is laid, the greatness of the design in the greatness of the preparation. In short, he sees that which God intends for him by that which God hath been already pleased to work in him. He doth both see and feel Salvation begun in the Soul.

For, my Brethren, we are to know this, and seriously consider it, that Salvation is not a thing wholly future, it is not only after Death, and in the other world, but it is a thing present. Heaven is to be had here, as well as hereafter, and he that is not saved here, shall never be saved. He that doth live an utter stranger to Heaven in this world, shall never enter into Heaven. The perfecting and completion of the work is reserved for the next life, but the inchoation and beginning of it is here, even here the Saints Conversation is in Heaven, there be their thoughts and affections; they walk with God, and have fellowship with Christ.

As soon as ever a man is sanctified, he is saved. When Grace is first planted in the heart, Salvation is begun. When Christ went home with *Zacharias*, he told him, Salvation is come to thine house to day. When Christ comes to any heart, Salvation comes along with him. Grace is glory in the Infancie and Bud: and as Grace doth thrive and grow, and improve in the heart, so the work of Salvation is carried on; therefore gracious renewings are in Scripture called glorious changes. *We beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory; i. e. from Grace, to Grace, from lower, to higher degrees.*

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The Apostle Paul saith, *Eph. 2. 5* When we were dead in sins, we were quickned together with Christ, by grace ye are saved. If quickened, and made partakers of Spiritual Life, the life of grace and holyness, then saved. There is Heaven and Salvation in the smallest quickenings, as there is the total sum or bargain in the earnest, and the crop or harvest in the first fruits.

Observe also that place in the *2 Tim. 1. 9*. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling.* If you be effectually called then you are actually saved, not only in *spe*, but in *re*, not only saved in hope but in deed. That person who is turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, is passed from Death to Life, he is out of reach of eternal dangers; The same calling is to virtue and glory, and so far as that call doth carry a man on in virtue, so high, full so high doth it advance and raise him up in glory.

So that when once you do experimentally find this change wrought in you, sin Crucified and Mortified in you, and Holiness Communicated to you. If you find that you are taken off from the old stock, and ingrafted into the Lord Jesus Christ, that you are in any measure (though never so small) made partakers of the Spirit, Life and Grace of Christ, then you may sit down in peace, and heartily rejoyce, for your eyes have seen God's Salvation. A renewing change is a saving change, and my brethren consider how much this should commend Grace to us: Oh how should they desire it, and beg it, and use means for it, who have it not, and you that have it, how thankful should you be, and how should you admire and bless God for it, since there is Salvation in it, there is a blessing in a cluster, fullness in Spiritual hungerings, Heaven and Glory in brokenness of heart.

Fourthly and Lastly. There are the sights of Heaven in a way of assurance, and this is the sight of, or the looking to the perfecting and completion of this most great and blessed work of Salvation. By assurance the believing Soul sees the matter brought to an issue, and the top stone laid in the building, which reaches as high as Heaven. The poor Christian in the midst of enemies and dangers, and from his low condition, from his Dughill or Cottage, can look upon all the glory and happiness above, and as great as it is, lay hold upon it, and claim it,

It this is mine; This God is my God for ever and ever: Heaven will be my Everlasting home, and the Kingdom there my portion, even as the Proto-Martyr *Stephen*, in a shower of stones which fell about his ears, could see Heaven opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and could comfort himself with such thoughts; Thus Jesus stands yonder as my Friend, my Advocate, and shortly I shall be there with him.

To the producing of this Assurance in the heart of a Christian, especially in an high degree, in its fulness, there is required not only the work, but also the witness of the Spirit. The work of the Spirit in Sanctification, drawing the divine image upon the Soul, breathing into it Spiritual Life, and implanting in it a gracious and holy nature, and then irradiating and shining upon those graces, that the Soul may see them, and see them to be what they are, the true grace of God, he doth bear witness to his own work, so that the Soul can say, the finger of God was here. This is not Flesh and Blood, this is more than nature, this is grate indeed. This you read of in *Rom. 8. 16. The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God.* There is the Testimony of our Spirits, our Consciences, and the Holy Ghost doth super-add his; And in the mouth of these two witnesses the thing is Established, and the Believer is satisfied, and cryeth *Alha Father.*

Take notice of that Prayer which *Paul* put up *Rom. 15. 13. That they might abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.* So that good hope through grace, and the abounding of that hope, the fullness of Assurance is no other than a divine work, brought about by the powerfull operation of the Spirit of God; The Resurrection of Christ from the Dead is the ground and reason of our hope. And the Holy Spirit of Christ is the Author of our hope. Now then lay these things together, that person who seeth Christ by Faith, who doth experience an inward change, and who hath the assured hope of Heaven and Glory, may very well say, that his eyes have seen Gods Salvation.

And the man that hath been blessed with such a sight, may very well be free and willing to depart out of this World to bid fare well to present comforts and enjoyments, and welcome Death in its nearest approaches. And this is the second thing

unto which I am now to speak, and he that considers what hath been spoken concerning this sight, will easily see there is enough in it alone to produce such an effect. But besides that there are four other sights which will contribute exceedingly towards such a willingness in such a person.

1. This man seeth enough in the World to render that bitter to him: There is Wormwood enough laid upon the breast of the Creatures, and he tastes it. Here I shall not take notice of those outward troubles and afflictions, in which he finds great exercises for his Faith and Patience, though these are the principal and only things, about which the carnal unregenerate heart is concerned. If there be no cloud upon his Tabernacle, no thorn in his side, nor gall in his cup, he sings a lullaby to his Soul, and concludes all well.

But sin, sin is that which sours and imbitters all to a Godly man, both other mens sins, and his own sins, without doors and within.

First, Other mens sins, that wickedness which the World lyeth in. Oh, it goeth to his very heart to see the profaneness and abominations of those among whom he is constrained to converse, and how that blessed and most holy God, whom he so dearly loves, is neglected, abused, dishonoured and affronted by them. Upon this account it was that good *Jeremiah's* Soul wept in secret, and Rivers of Tears ran down *David's* eyes, and just *Eli* was vexed from day to day with the filthy Conversation of the wicked. Such men cannot take their rest here, because the place is so shamefully polluted, and the villanies of others are such a stink in his Nostrils.

Secondly, That which doth yet much more pain him is his own sin, a foul World without, and a wretched heart within, the plague of that which is not perfectly cured, the sin that dwelleth in him, the pravity and corruption of his nature, the old man, that he cannot possibly shake off, that troublesome old man, together with many and great Transgressions of his Life. Hence such complaints and grounds as these, Oh, what a wretch am I, should be so unmindfull of God, so unthankfull to God, so unfruitfull before him: That I should walk so unworthy of him, that hath laid such Obligations upon me. Oh! that I should offend him so much, and glorifie him no more, and serve him no better. Oh! this goeth near indeed, this is a sword

sword in his bones, a burden too heavy for him to bear, this extorted from holy *Paul* that bitter cry; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of Death? This is my plague, but whence or by whom cometh my deliverance? And when he considers that deliverance is wrought by Christ, he blesteth God for him, and since a perfect deliverance is to be brought to him by death, he thanks God for it, and this is one thing that makes this grim Messenger so lovely and acceptable to him, because he knows by that all the shackles of corruption shall be knocked off, and he shall be troubled with sin no more. When he shall once lay down the body of flesh, he shall also lay down the body of sin and death.

2. The Godly man sees enough to render all the comforts of this present life cheap to him; So that he doth not love them too much, nor value them at too high a rate: They are not so cheap as that he doth slight and despise them, or is not thankfull to God for them; He admires the goodness of God in all his mercies, even the very least, the coarsest garments he wears, and the brownest bread he eats, and the meanest lodging, the hardest bed he hath. I am less said good *Jacob*, then the least of all thy mercies.

But they are so cheap, as that he is not unwilling to part with them, or to go from them; Whensoever God pleaseth he can part with them: The primitive Christians took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and he can go from them. *Paul* desired to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, he could without any regret or reluctancy leave the World behind him, so long as he did see his God and Saviour before him. Those comforts which God is pleased to afford unto his people while they are here, are of two kinds; Spiritual and Temporal.

1. God is pleased to afford unto his People outward Temporal comforts; These he hath in the creature from the hand of common providence, which feeds and cloaths him, and provides for him, and sometimes wrings out to him waters of a full cup; But be his portion here never so fat, his outward enjoyments never so large, yet they are but low enjoyments, they are but for a vile body, we do consume and waste, and will shortly moulder away, and crumble into dust; Be they never so delicious and pleasant, yet still they are perishing bread, it perisheth in the using. And besides there is a snare in these things.

things, so that we must use them with caution and fear ; there is a snare in Relations, and in possessions, a snare in Riches and Pleasures, a snare in Worldly Honours and Dignities. Oh, how often do these things divert the mind from God, and distract the thoughts, and deaden the heart, and embase the affections, and clog the heels, and hinder holy motions, these are weights that press down, so that the Christian moves Heavily in the way of God, and cannot do those things that he would, nor any thing as he would ; and it doth speak a great deal of wisdom, and calls for no less care, so to enjoy the world, and take the comfort of it, as to avoid the snare in it, and to keep our selves unspotted by it.

Secondly, God is pleased to give unto his people here inward and spiritual comforts, from the hand of his Spirit, in the way of the Gospel, and Gospel-Ordinances and Duties. He gives them some clusters from *Canaan*, some *Pisgah*-sights of the Land of promise, some *prælibaments*, and foretastes of those Pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore ; there are the kisses of his Lips, the manifestations of his Love, the witnessings of his Spirit, the unspeakable joys of Faith : and these are sweet indeed, and inestimably precious to the gracious Soul. *One day in thy Courts*, said *David*, *are better than a Thousand elsewhere*. What a day of gladness doth a smile of God make, and what melody is there in the softest whisper of Divine Love. No such day in the week, as that of a Sabbath ; and no such meeting in the World, as that with God at an Ordinance, it affords sweetness beyond expression.

But alas ! Here is something to allay that sweetness ; the good man doth too too often find himself unfitted for these things, his Soul is out of tune, he cannot hear, nor can he pray, nor meditate as he would, nor keep up so warm and intimate a communion with God as he would : Wandering, and dulness, and deadness do adhere to his duties ; and he blushes and mourns to see and consider the iniquities of his holy things.

And then again, he doth too frequently miss of that good and comfort which he expects, and waits for, he goeth out full of hopes, and returns home blank ; He looks for much, but gets little ; he cannot see his Fathers face, that is covered with

a Cloud, nor can he hear his Saviours voice, for he hath withdrawn himself, and is gone ; he cannot find those kindly meltings and warmings, and quickenings, and enlargings that he desires ; but he goeth with a pittifully cold, hard, straitned, dead heart ; so that he begins to question Gods Love, and his own Faith.

If he doth at any time meet with his gracious God, and is sensible of his doing so. If he can say, God was with me of a truth ; I have this day sate under the shadow of my dearest Saviour with great delight, and his Fruit hath been sweet to my taste. Alas it is but short, (*Rara hora brevis mora*) it comes but seldom, and it lasts not long. It is but a little visit ; and no sooner, it may be, hath the gracious Soul done blessing himself in his enjoyments, but he sees cause to bemoan himself for his loss.

But however it be with some particular Saints, upon whom the Sun of Righteousness stands and shines, with constant beams, yet this is most certain as to all the Saints, that the most sweet, and full enjoyment which they have of God (while they are here) the most pleasant and comfortable communion they have with him, is but mediate. Christ looks upon him through the Lattice, and they see him but as in a glass, darkly. All their refreshings are conveyed by Pipes, they do not lie at the Fountain-head. When they are most present with the Lord, they are even then absent from the Lord ; and upon this account it is no matter of wonder to see or hear that they are willing to exchange a dark vision for a clear one, seeing in a glass, for a seeing face to face ; to exchange interrupt pleasures for permanent and abiding ones, and mediate fellowship for that which is immediate. Love is an uniting affection, and is set for the strictest and closest embraces of it's endeared object. And so a Soul that truly loves God, cannot but desire to be as near to him as it can be, and ready to exchange the comforts of the way, for the joys and pleasures of the Countrey.

3. He that hath seen God's Salvation, hath seen enough to deliver him from the dread and terrour of Death ; for this is evident and obvious, that if Christ be any mans Salvation, it is utterly impossible that Death should be his destruction. A man that is in Christ is not out of the reach of Death, but he is secured from the hurt of Death.

Take an unregenerate man, one that is a stranger unto Christ, and he cannot see any thing in Death that should commend it to him : It hath a dreadful aspect, and a worse issue ; he hath cause to fear both Death and its Followers : He is stript at Death, and laſt in Hell. Death to him is a dark paſſage to outer and endleſs darkneſs.

But now as grimas Death looks, a Believer can eaſily diſcover a great deal, that will make it lovely ; even Death it ſelf hath its beauty ; as thus.

It is a conquered Enemy. Chriſt went into the Grave it's ſtrongeſt hold, and there he baffled it, broke its Chains, and carried away its Gates ; he diſarmed, and unſtung it ; ſo that Holy Paul did, and every true Believer may play with it, and triumph over it ; 1 Cor. 15. *O Death where is thy ſting, O grave, where is thy victory, the ſting of Death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the Law, but thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Though Death kill the Believer, yet it doth not damage him ; and though it ſeparate between his Soul and Body, yet not between him and God : *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord ? ſhall Death,* ſaith Paul, no, ſaith he, in that, as well as in other things, *we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us.*

Nay through Chriſt, death is not only conquered, but alſo reconciled to all the Saints ; it is now become your Friend, and Servant, and doth you a real kindneſs, So that, as Solomon tells us, *The day of your Death is better than the day of your Birth.* You came into the World crying, but you may go out of it Triumphant, and with the voice of melodie. The Primitive Chriſtians did not array themſelves in Sables at the Funerals of their Friends ; but in White, looking upon their Dying Day, as the Day of their Nuptials. It was moſt terrible to Nature to be torn in pieces by Wild Beaſts, to die at a Stake, to breathe their laſt in Flames, yet, in ſuch a Death did they glory, counting Martyrdom their Crown.

What though Death carry you from all your preſent comforts, it doth at the ſame time ſet you out of the reach of all troubles ; and as it carries you from comforts, ſo it carries you to comforts ; yea, to ſuch comforts as are far better than thoſe you part with. It pulls down this decaying and tottering Taberna-

cle, that a more beautiful and stately Fabrick may be erected. It takes you out of your sorry Cottages, and carries you to those Blissful Mansions which are in your Fathers House. The Grave it self, though it be darksome and lonely, yet it is a good resting place ever since our Lord lay there: He hath perfum'd it, and made it both soft and safe. That Bed of Dust is now better than a Bed of Down, or Roses. It is true, in the Grave, though Christ's Body did not, yet ours must see Corruption, they must putrifie, and at last be Converted into Dust; but that Dust is more precious than Gold Oar, and shall accordingly be most curiously preserved, not an Atome of it shall be lost. And that Body which is sown in weakness, shall be raised in power, and cloathed with immortality, and made like unto Christ's own most glorious Body.

4. And Lastly, That man who hath seen Gods Salvation, hath also seen all things amiable, and desireable in the other World, whither Death will carry him. He hath looked within the Vail, and had a prospect of that better Countrey. There hath he by the Eye of Faith seen incomparable beauties to enamour him, an excellent Glory to adorn him, unspeakable comforts to delight him, the best of Friends to invite him, and an innumerable Company of Angels and Saints to bid him welcome.

There shall be nothing at all that may offend, nothing in him to offend God; nothing without to offend him; nothing of sin, and nothing of sorrow; no temptation, no affliction, no danger, no loss, no frown, no fear, no sickness, no pain, no want; no angry withdrawings, not one pricking Briar, nor one vexing Thorn.

But there shall be all things that you can desire, and are suitable to that glorious State unto which you shall be advanced, all things that will contribute to your happiness and comfort. The Scripture tells us, *Psal. 16. That in God's presence there will be a fullness of joy*, and by consequence there can be no scantiness of enjoyments, but pleasures for evermore, yea, a River of Pleasures, nay, a bottomless, and boundless Ocean of them; the Infinite and Eternal God must himself be exhausted, before the delights and pleasures of Heaven can be spent. Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath entred into the heart of man what God in the Mansions above hath prepared, and reserved
for

for them that love him. There is a feast of Love; a Crown of Life, and Robes of Glory. There is *Abraham's Bosom*, and the joy of their Lord, which is too big to enter into them, therefore they shall enter into it, and be filled, encompassed and swallowed up by it, as a small Vessel in the Sea.

When once the gracious Soul hath set foot upon that celestial Countrey, and made its entrance into that stately and magnificent Palace of the great King; he shall be not only filled with satisfaction, but likewise rapt up into astonishment, and highest admiration; What am I that God hath brought me hitherto? And what were all my services, that they should be thus rewarded. Oh, how light and inconsiderable doth he now think all his former sorrows and sufferings, if compared with that far more exceeding, and eternal weight of Glory.

What low thoughts will he then have of the Skin-deep beauties, and transitory delights here below, on which the besotted Children of men do so foolishly dote. And with what an holy scorn, and indignation will he call to mind that pains men did take for, and that eagerness with which they did pursue the trifling vanities of the Earth, and how they scrambled for them, and quarrel'd about them.

And oh how doth he wish and long for that blessed day, in which the Church militant shall be made triumphant, and all his gracious Friends, all his Brethren and Sisters in Christ, all the chosen and beloved of God shall be taken up to the same place, that they may see what he sees, and be possessors of that which he enjoys. That so they may altogether contemplate the glory of God, and be satisfied with the fruition of him, and endear, admire, and extol Father, Son, and Spirit unto all Eternity. Lay all these things together, and you will easily see, that there is great, yea, abundant reason, why those that have seen Gods Salvation, should be willing, yea, desirous to depart in peace, and to take their flight into the other world. And now I come to shut up this discourse with some application.

And in the first place this serves to shew us, what it is, that above all things should engage, and draw out the vigour and strength of our desires; namely, the sight of Gods Salvation. My Brethren, I beseech you frequently to consider, that we must all die, there is no shift for it. Death will not be bribed, and it cannot

cannot be avoided. It is appointed for all men once to die, by a Statute-Law enacted in Heaven, which admits of no repeal. The aged Father of this Family is now gone, and the youngest Child here must follow him sooner, or later.

And is it not good for us to prepare for Death? Will it not be our Wisdom? Will your Wisdom more eminently discover it self in any thing, than in this? That so this King of Terrours may not be terrible unto you; that you may not fear him, but rejoyce in him; you will die uncomfortably, (this is past all dispute) you will die unhappily, if you die unpreparedly. Oh the horror that will sieze an awakened sinner upon a Death-Bed! When he shall think thus, my glass is run, my time is spent, I must die, but alas, I am not fit to die. I must now appear before my Judges, but I have not made my peace.

Now then go on and consider, what is to be done by you, in order to this preparation: A Life of vanity and folly will not fit you; the more you sin, the more you sharpen the sting of Death. An eager minding the World, and pursuing the delights of that will not fit you; the more you have indulged your self in a course of prophaneness, the more afraid you will be to die; and the more you have set your hearts upon the Creatures, the more loath, and unwilling you will be to die, when you come to die, the love of the World will make you unwilling to leave it; and Conscience of sin and guilt will make you tremble at the thoughts of appearing before God.

Turn away your Eyes then from beholding vanity, and pray that they may be opened to see Gods Salvation. Oh, study Christ, get an intimate acquaintance with him: Beg of God to reveal him to you, and in you, that you may know him, whom to know, is life eternal, and never rest quiet nor contented, till you have seen him by an Eye of Faith, and laid hold upon him by an hand of Faith, as one that loved you, and gave himself for you; and have a care that there be not a (*deceptio visus*) mistake in the case, but look to this, that your sight be saving, and the Faith you pretend to, the Faith of Gods Elect, that you may upon good grounds (such as the Scriptures will warrant) appropriate him to your selves, as your Lords and Gods, and Saviour.

Rest not in any thing till you find and feel Christ living, and commanding in you; his Image drawn upon you, his Law written

ten in your hearts, and his Spirit poured out ; Take not up with a verbal profession, formal duties, and unblameable Conversation, common convictions, and some stirrings and flushes of affection : All this may be, and all come to nothing. Hypocrites may go so far, and yet they do not go far enough, but after all fall short of Heaven. It is not the form of Godliness that will avail you, but the power, not a name to live, but the life it self. God is not taken with empty shews and appearances, he is for reality and truth in the inward parts ; You can take but little comfort from Christ dying without you, unless you find Christ formed and living in you : notwithstanding the Death of Christ you may be for ever lost and damned, unless you be made partakers of his Life. Remember and consider that expression, *Col. 1. 27. Christ in you, the hope of glory.* When Christ dwells in you by Faith, when he is in you by his Spirit, and by his Graces, then, and not till then is there a firm Foundation laid, on which you may build the hope of glory ; For hope so grounded is good hope, such as shall never make ashamed.

Use 2. The second use will be of Reprehension. Those are blame-worthy, and deserve reproof, whose eyes have seen Gods Salvation. Men and Women that do know the Jesus in whom they have believed, and are made partakers of sanctifying, saving grace, and have had the manifestations of God's favour, and Covenant love made to them, and are verily perswaded that it shall be well with them when they dye, and that they shall go to Heaven when they go from Earth, and yet they are loath to dye, and thoughts of their departure from hence are afflictive to them.

When the message of Death was brought by the Prophet to good *Hezekiah*, he turned his face to the wall, and prayed, and wept sore. And good *David* himself, though he knew that God had made with him an Everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure, yet he cryed, O spare me that I may recover strength before I go hence, and be seen no more ; He would fain live a little longer, and see a few more days past over his head.

I do not wonder that wicked men are loath to dye, for they get nothing by it, nay, they lose all by it, they are utterly ruined and undone by it. Death takes them from all their good

things, jovial companions, and pleasant enjoyments, and carries them into that Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone. Therefore who would think it strange that they should put from them the day of their Death, which will be to them such a day of evil. They have reason to desire Life, yea to say, I would live always, because it is better for them to live than to dye, if you kill them you spoil all. Such men may well say to Death, as *Ahab* did to *Elijah*, hast thou found me, O mine enemy?

But here is the wonder, that a Godly man should firmly assent unto this truth, that there is another life after this, and that that life is unspeakably better than this; There is no compare between the comforts of this and the glory of that, and they are also confident, that when once they are absent from the body, they shall be present with the Lord, and when once this frail, uncertain, troublesome life shall come to an end, they shall live that better life, when once they are got off this stormy tempestuous Sea, they shall bath themselves Eternally in those Rivers of Pleasures, which are at God's Right-hand; And yet Death is a word that sounds harsh in their ears, they care not to hear of it: when they think of it they are troubled. A Deaths head upon the board spoils the Mirth, and marrs the Feast, it doth not only make them serious, that it should do, but it also makes them sad and dumpish, and still they have desires that they may, and some hope that they shall have a longer continuance in the World, and draw out some more years, yet before they come to the end of their line. I must and do most readily grant that long life is a blessing, a great blessing, as such, it is the matter of the promise, but withall know, Eternal Life is a greater blessing, and he is no loser that lives but a little while here, and then goes to live for ever with God. For gracious persons that have seen God's Salvation, and know they have seen it, I say for such to be unwilling to dye carries two evils in the Bowels of it.

1. It is too great a magnifying of this present evil World, an over-valuing of it, and a setting too high a rate, indeed an unreasonable price upon the enjoyments and delights of it; Your esteem of them are far above their intrinsic worth, what will carnal men say, who stand by, and see how you are wedded to the World, and unwilling to be divorced from it? What have they reason to say, but that you find a great deal

in it? You tast the fatness of the Olive, and the sweetness of the Vine, and so think it is good to be here. Certainly this speaks your setting your hearts too much upon the Creatures. And hereby you do justifie and encourage them in their Worldliness, they are strengthened in their love of the World, and devotedness to it; And also you do hereby crosse and thwart God, and run counter to him in one of his grand designs, which is to wean his People from the World, and to take their hearts off from creature delights, which do ingross so much of their time, and cares, and do so much distract their thoughts, and embase their Spirits, and hinder them both as to their service of God, and Communion with him; And indeed, how indecorous and unbecoming is it for Heaven born Souls to embrace Dunghills, and for those that profess themselves risen with Christ to set their affections upon those things that are here upon Earth; And for you who are the children of God, and heirs of Heaven, to mind carnal things. It is far more unseemly than to see the heir of a Crown stopping Ovens, or raking Kennels.

After these things, saith our Saviour, do the *Gentiles* seek, that is, those who know no better, who are without God in the World, who are drowned in the flesh, and understand not the worth of an immortal Soul, and upon these things let them dote still, alas, their portion is in this life, being Aliens from the Covenants of promise: and having no hope. But as for you who have been taught of God, who have heard of a blessed immortality, who have seen those invisible glories that are within the vail, you should be disingaged from all inferiour delights, and carry towards them with a Spirit of indifference; You should use the world but do not love it, make it serve your occasions, but suffer it not to command your affections; While you have it in your hands, and in your chests, keep it out of your hearts. The world is (as we use to say of fire) a very good servant, but a very bad master. Things are usefull and beautifull in their places, so is the world, but when it is in the heart, it is out of its place, and then it is stark nought, and doth much hurt.

2. For those who are the people of God, and do know they are so, who have seen God's Salvation, I say for them to be unwilling to dye is a great reproach and disparagement to those glories which are above. Christians, you do hereby bring up an ill report upon the Land of promise, as if the Honey and Milk of *Canaan* were not so good & desirable as the Garlick & Onions

ons of *Egypt*, what is the interpretation & meaning of such a Spirit, but that you fear it will be to your loss to exchange Earth for Heaven, & to leave delights Temporal for those that are Eternal.

X What shall I say, this averfeness from Death, and loathnesses to depart from hence is a piece of practical blasphemy, as if these sorry cottages were better to inhabit than those stately Palaces, that these puddle delights, and muddy streams were more delicious and desirable, than that pure River of water of life, which is clear as Chrystal, and proceeds out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, as if these childish and trifling vanities did out-weigh and out-worth the glories which are above; And these pitifull contemptible glow-worms did out-shine and obscure the Eternal Sun of Righteousness; As if God would take you from hence to your loss, and you should be better in a strange Land than in your Fathers house; And the preparations that God hath made for Eternity, are not so good as those that he hath made for a short time, and so *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Peter, Paul*, and the rest of the Saints departed, had better have staid here, and now they are with God, do wish themselves with us again. In a word, it is as if the immediate and full enjoyment of God would not be sufficient for you, you could not find room enough, nor goodness and delights enough in a God, but you must go begging to the door of creatures, and patch up to your selves an happiness with these small and sorry shreds of being, and you have found more to live upon, and to delight your selves in the drop of a bucket, than you can or do find in the Ocean of goodness. I beseech you seriously consider of these things, all these things lye uppermost, any one may see them in such persons unwillingness and loathness to dye whensoever God would have him. But to proceed.

Use 3. In the third and last place, this may prove a very comfortable consideration, and staff of support in the hands of those who labour under sorrow and continual heaviness of heart, because of their departure of their gracious and holy Relations, they are dead, and you carry as if all your comforts were dead with them. This is certain that when God gives such blows, those, that have any thing of tenderness, do feel the smart of them. Breaches in the Family do make breaches upon the Spirit. When *Lazarus* was dead, Jesus wept; Mourning at Funerals is no Solacism, but a lovely sight, so the sorrow be kept within those bounds that reason & Religion have set it; And where there are

such

such breaches, they call for binding up ; We should all be as for many good *Samaritans*, pouring Oyl into the wounds of the Spirit, for the suppleing and healing of them.

God hath been pleased to come into this Family, and break the head of it, and cut it off ; in taking him away, he took away a tender Husband, a loving Father, a good Master, a dear Friend, one that in these evil days owned God, his Waies, and People, and kept a Church in his House, and his doors open, that hungry Souls might feed upon, and be refreshed with the bread of life, which was there from Sabbath to Sabbath, delivered out unto them. The death of such a person is a common loss, not only to the Familie, but to the Country too, and because thereof you are in Heaviness, and afflicted in your Spirits.

Neither is this your case alone, but of many others. Death rides in Circuit, and according to the Commission which it hath received, so it makes it seizures, here in an Husband deprived of the delight of his Eyes, there is a woman made a Widow, and her Children Fatherless, Many a faithful, fruitful, useful Christian is cut down, under whose shadow, and in whose fellowship his Relations and Acquaintance did greatly rejoyce.

Unto such I have something to say, that should prevail to the silencing of them, and that is this, it is the will of God ; the great God will have it so. Thou wouldest have had thy Husband, thy Wife, thy Father, thy Child lived longer, but God would have him die now ; and this should knock all quarrelings, and murmurings, and discontents down ; for there is all the reason in the world why God's will should take place, and he should fulfill all his pleasure, and why our will should submit, and give place to God's.

And then I have something to say, that may quiet, & satisfie you under such a providence ; for it is not enough for us that we be silent under it, unless we be also reconciled to it, & at peace with it, now in order thereunto, take these 2 particulars, & consider them.

1. They did see Gods Salvation before they did depart, and so they dyed not under terroure, nor in doubt, nor at any uncertainty, but in peace ; before Death closed the Eyes of their Bodies, God had opened the Eyes of their Faith, and shewn Christ to them, and his love in Christ ; and you have reason to be perswaded good things concerning them, even such as do accompany Salvation, nay, to be now perswaded of their Salvation it self. This was the reason of my choosing these words of *Simon* for the

Subject of my discourse at this time, because they were the Swan-like Song of our deceased Brother, the very last words he spake, save some short, and holy Counsels which he gave to his beloved, and most hopeful Son, and shall not this satisfie you : But then add,

2. Now that those Holy ones are dead, they see those things which they never saw; things that are most richly worth their seeing; and which, as the case now stands with mankind, they could not see without dying. They have those fights which make the seer blessed, they are taken up to the beatifical Vision. They do not see an end of all their sins and sorrows, nothing shall defile, nor afflict them more, all filth, and all tears are wiped away; they see the accomplishment of all their hopes, the fulfilling of all their prayers, the reward of all their services, the Crown of all their sufferings.

They see the excellent Majesty and Glory of that God whom they had chosen, and do now behold his face in righteousness: Neither is that sight terrible to them, as it was to *Moses* in the Mount, so that he did exceedingly fear and quake. No, those Holy Souls do see God, and live, and rejoyce; that sight is their satisfaction, and delight. They see that Blessed Jesus, who loved them, and gave himself for them, and washed them in his own blood, and made them Kings and Priests unto God; yea, they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is. They do see that Holy Spirit which convinced them, and sanctified them, who directed them in their difficulties, strengthened them in their weaknesses, assisted them in their duties, and most sweetly supported, and comforted them in all their distresses. They see an innumerable company of Angels and Spirits of Just men made perfect. In short, they see that which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, namely, that Glory, Kingdom, Inheritance, those Robes, Crowns, and Thrones which God hath prepared for them that love him. And the day is coming, in which they shall again see those Bodies (that at their flight to Heaven they left behind) in a better State than ever. And you O Saints shall see them too, and Christ with them, and then your hearts shall rejoyce, and your joy no man shall take from you. Only, in the mean time, do you live believingly, walk humbly, holily, and circumspectly; get your Vessels filled with Oil; your Lamps burning, and your Loins girt; make haste to the Kingdom of God, and be ye followers of them, that through Faith and Patience do inherit the Promises.

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